Mini Visits the Atlantic Ocean

Herminder Ohri

Illustrations
Ratnakar Singh

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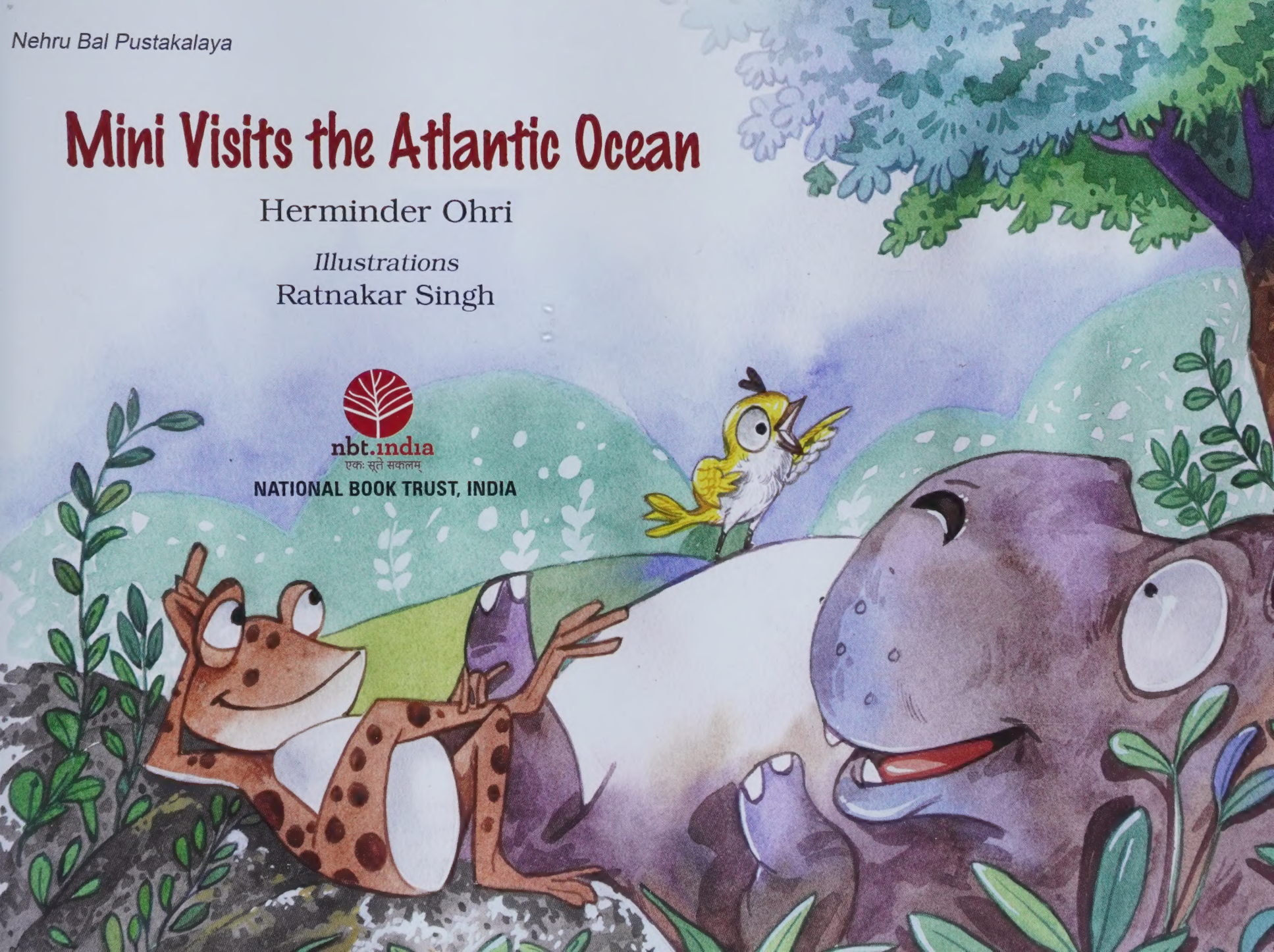


Mini the hippo, Grinny the frog and Stalky the bird are lazing in the sun. The Wind blows in. "Hello, where are you blowing to?" asks Mini.

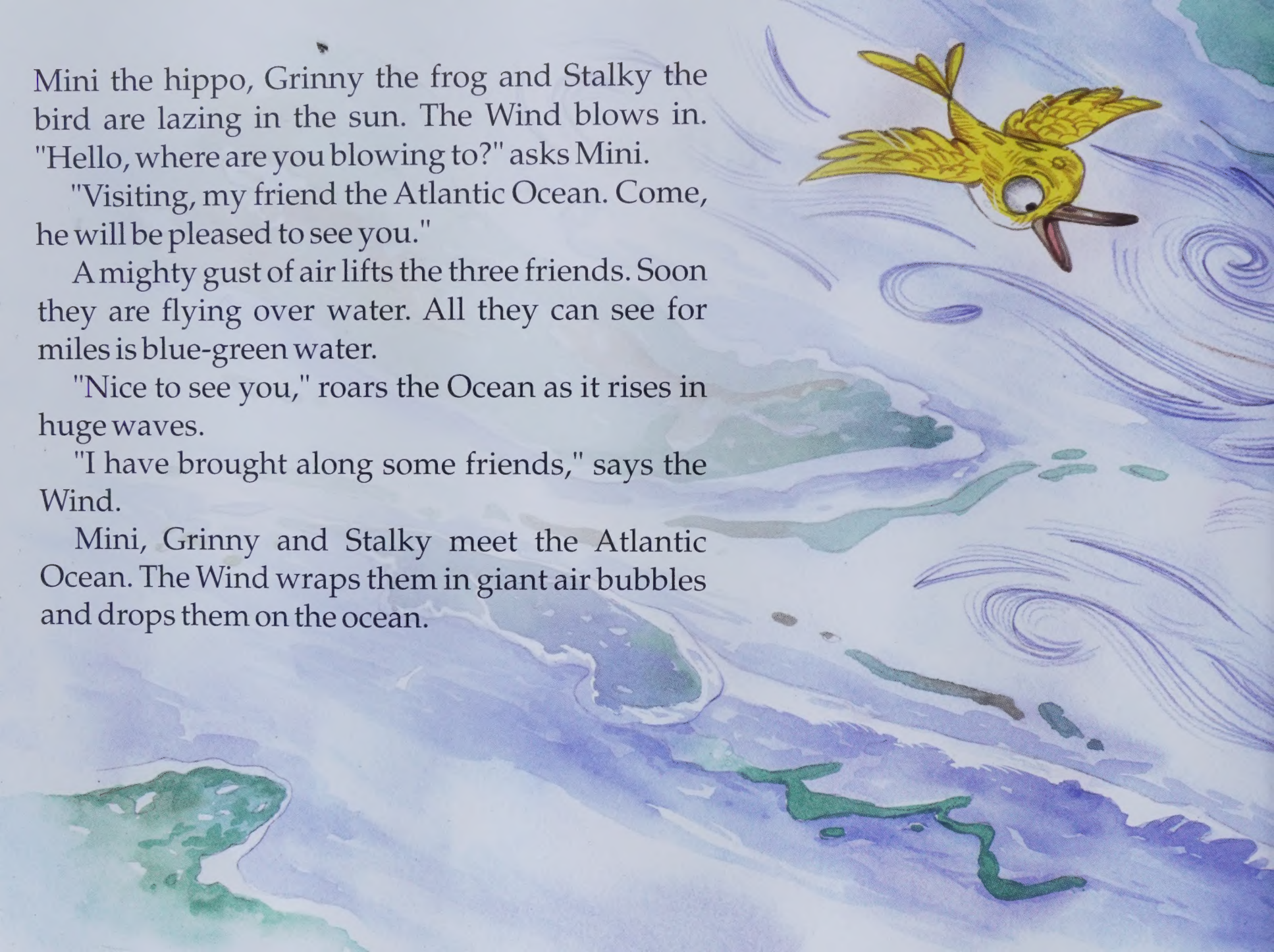
"Visiting, my friend the Atlantic Ocean. Come, he will be pleased to see you."

A mighty gust of air lifts the three friends. Soon they are flying over water. All they can see for miles is blue-green water.

"Nice to see you," roars the Ocean as it rises in huge waves.

"I have brought along some friends," says the Wind.

Mini, Grinny and Stalky meet the Atlantic Ocean. The Wind wraps them in giant air bubbles and drops them on the ocean.



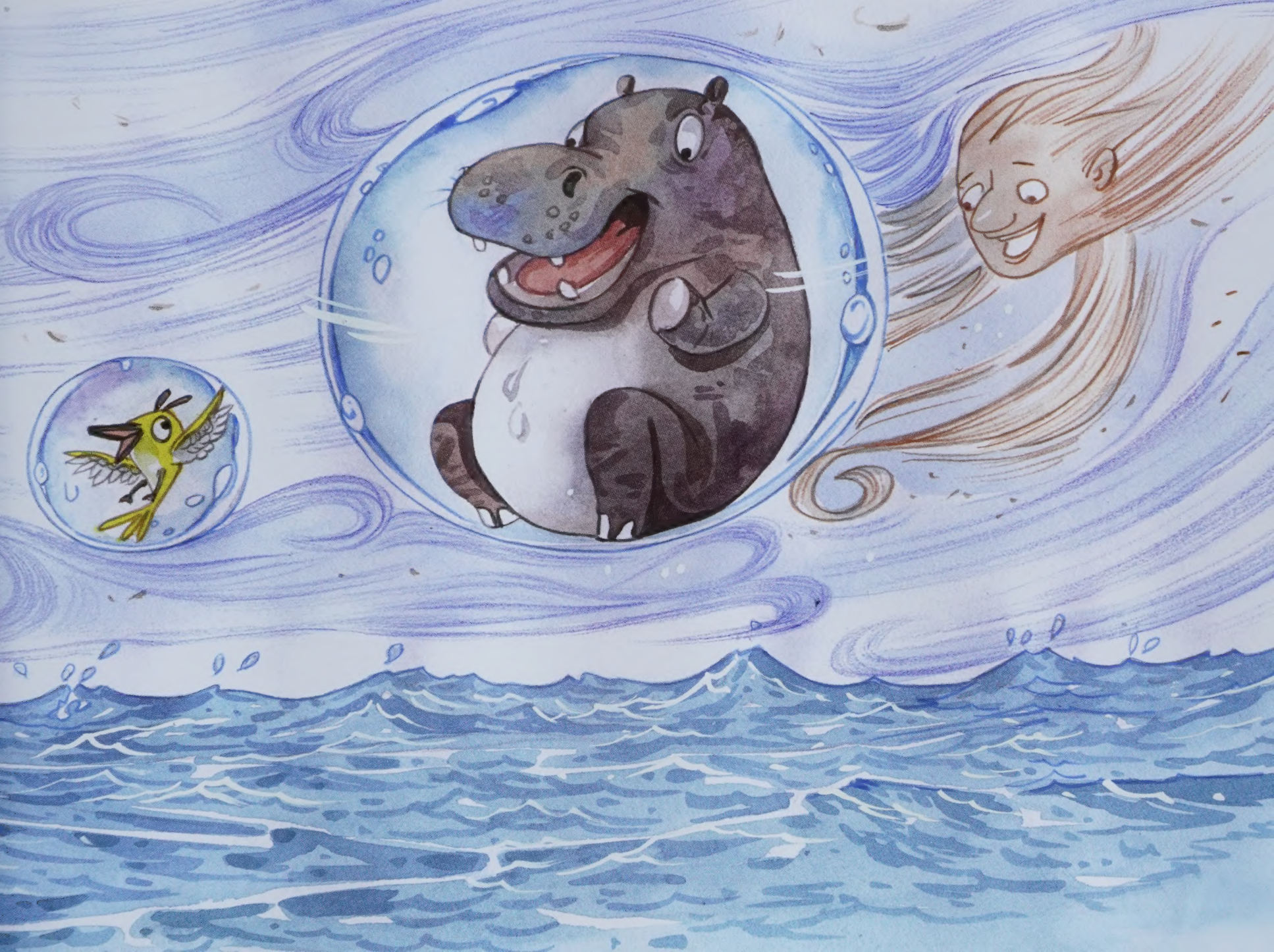
" I will be back in the evening, show them your wonders," addressing the Ocean thus, the Wind swooshes away.

"You seem . . . a . . . a . . . big . . ." gulps Grinny.

"Well! I am more than seventy one million square kilometres, and the second largest ocean in the world."

"Any land . . . somewhere?" Stalky asks hopefully.

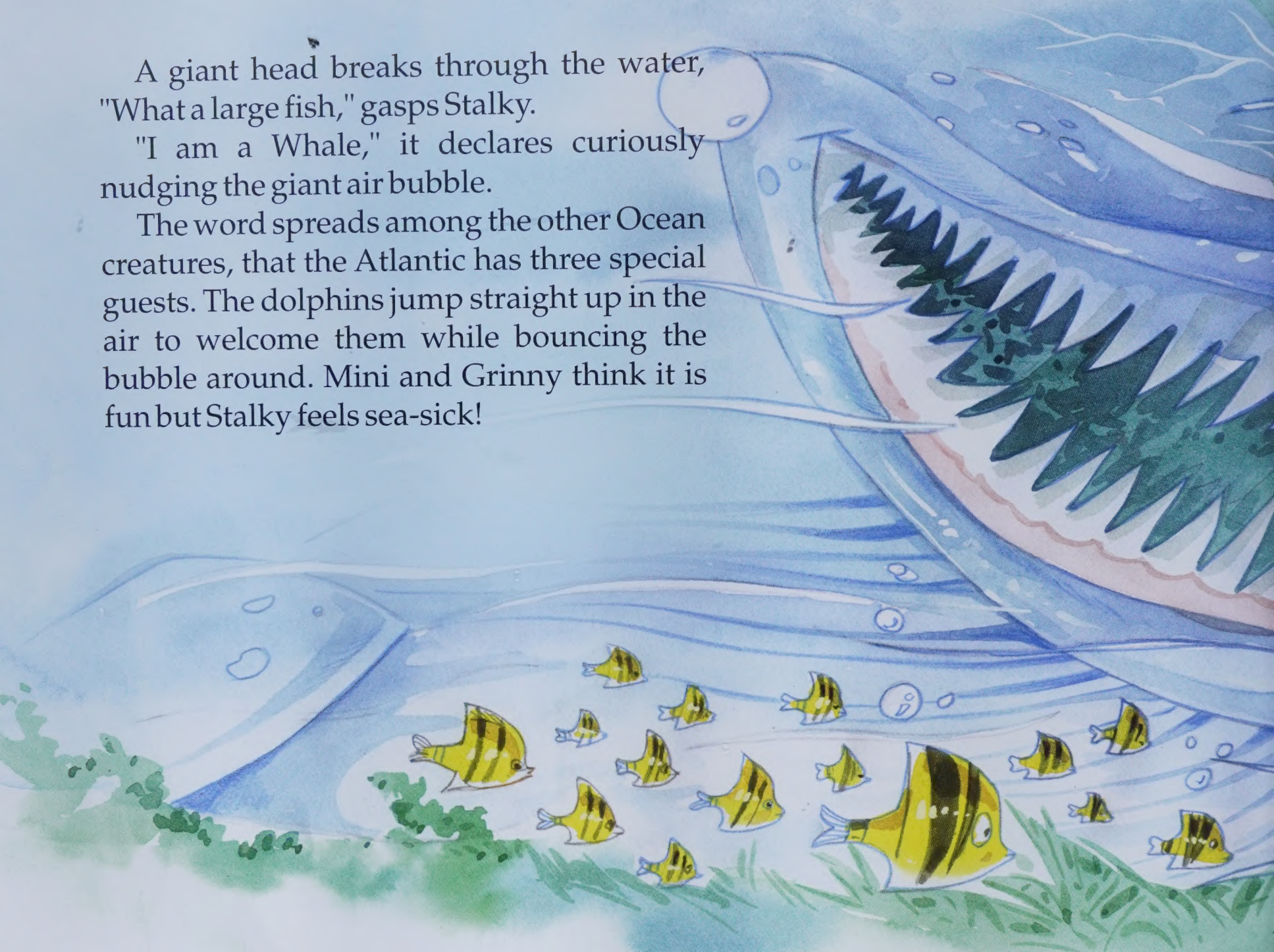
"Yes! North and South America on one side, Europe and Africa on the other side. My north and south are cold and icy. I am also very wide at some places, more than four thousand kilometres!" says the Atlantic spreading its waves proudly.



A giant head breaks through the water, "What a large fish," gasps Stalky.

"I am a Whale," it declares curiously nudging the giant air bubble.

The word spreads among the other Ocean creatures, that the Atlantic has three special guests. The dolphins jump straight up in the air to welcome them while bouncing the bubble around. Mini and Grinny think it is fun but Stalky feels sea-sick!



The waves guide the bubbles deep under water.

"Look!" says an excited Stalky, as schools of fish sweep pass in perfect formation.

Stalky, sticks his head out and gobbles a fish.

As they go lower, Mini claps, "What a beautiful garden you have!"

The Atlantic breaks into ripples as it rolls them towards swaying flowers like sea-anemones. Brightly coloured fish darts between them. Sharp edged red and white corals grow like trees, studded with starfish.

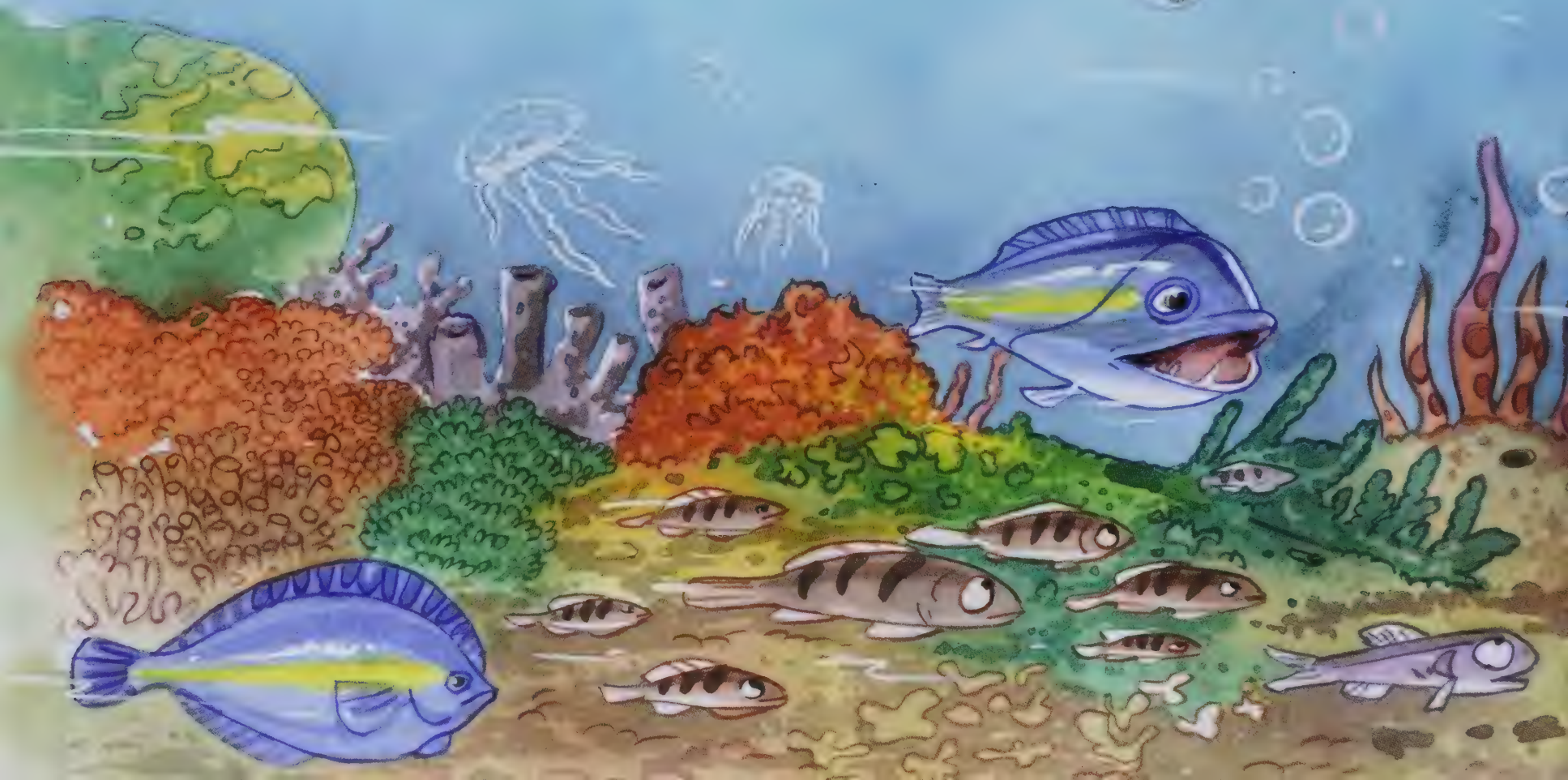
From deep holes come out shy octopus, lobsters, crabs and oysters.

The Atlantic takes the visitors deeper, "You have mountains and valleys!" exclaims a surprised Mini.

"Oh yes!" swirls the Ocean as he plunges them deeper and deeper. It is very dark here.

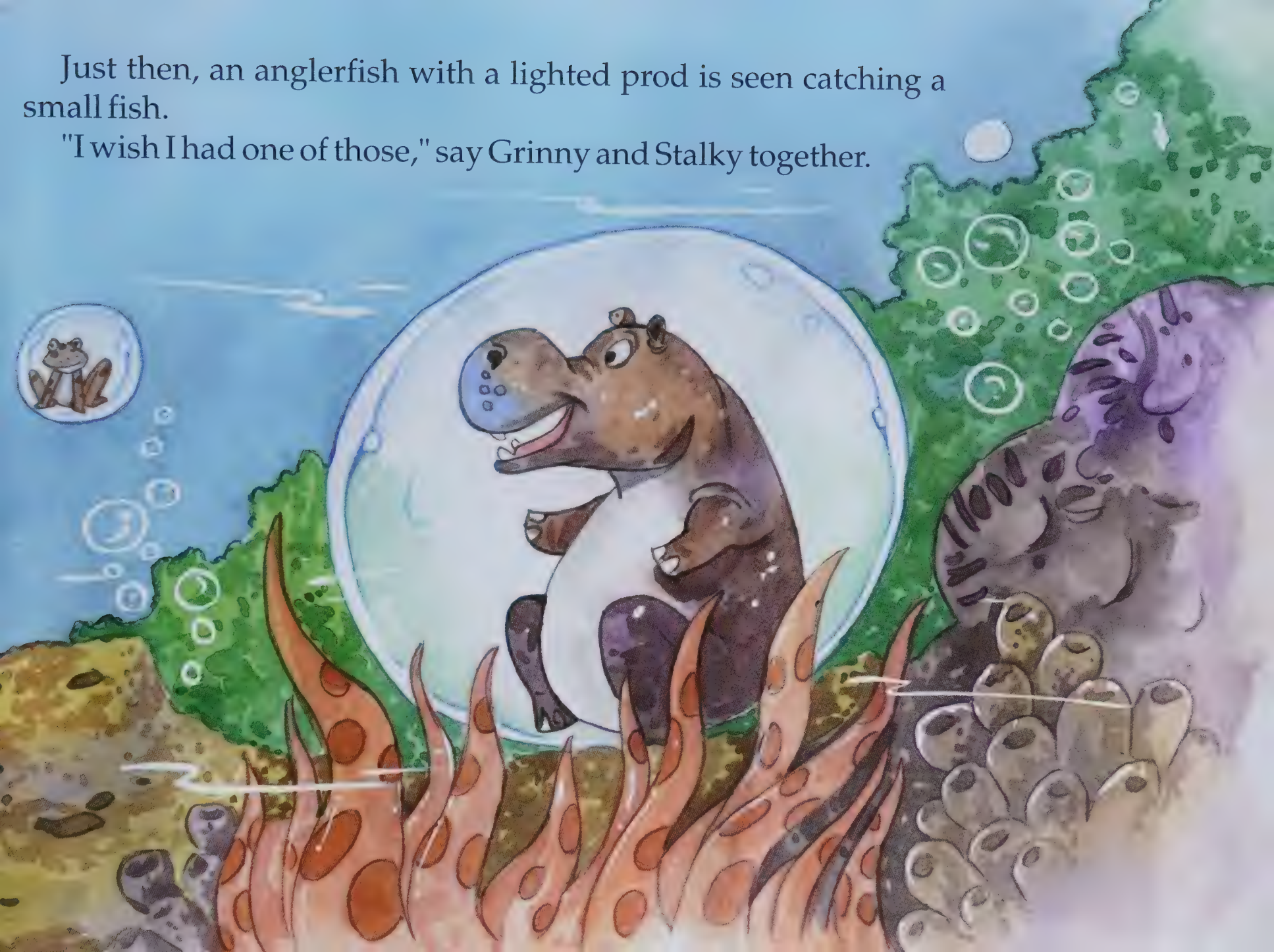
"Look! There are little lights . . . moving," gasps Grinny.

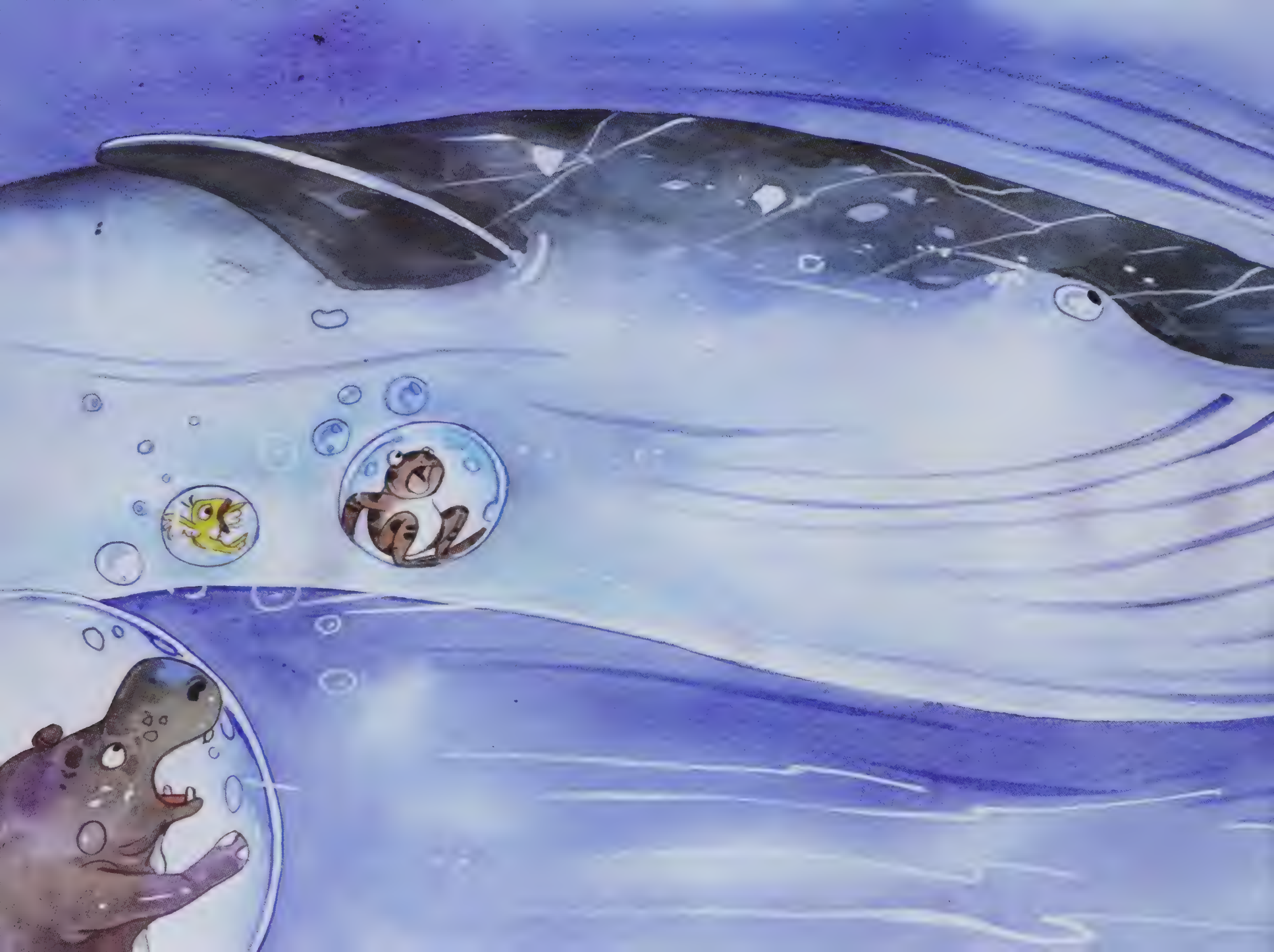
"The fish on my floor have their own lights," answers the Ocean.

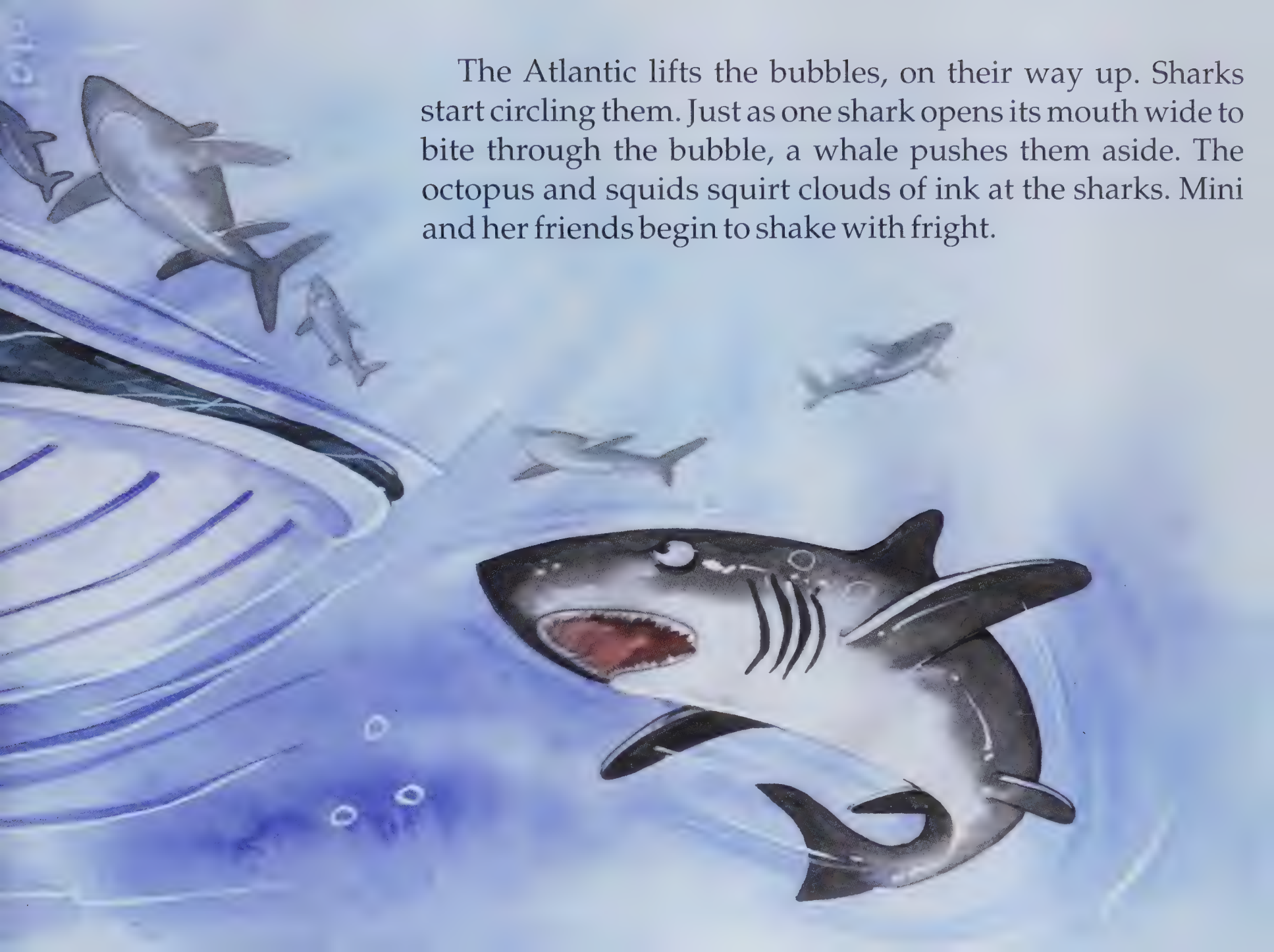


Just then, an anglerfish with a lighted prod is seen catching a small fish.

"I wish I had one of those," say Grinny and Stalky together.



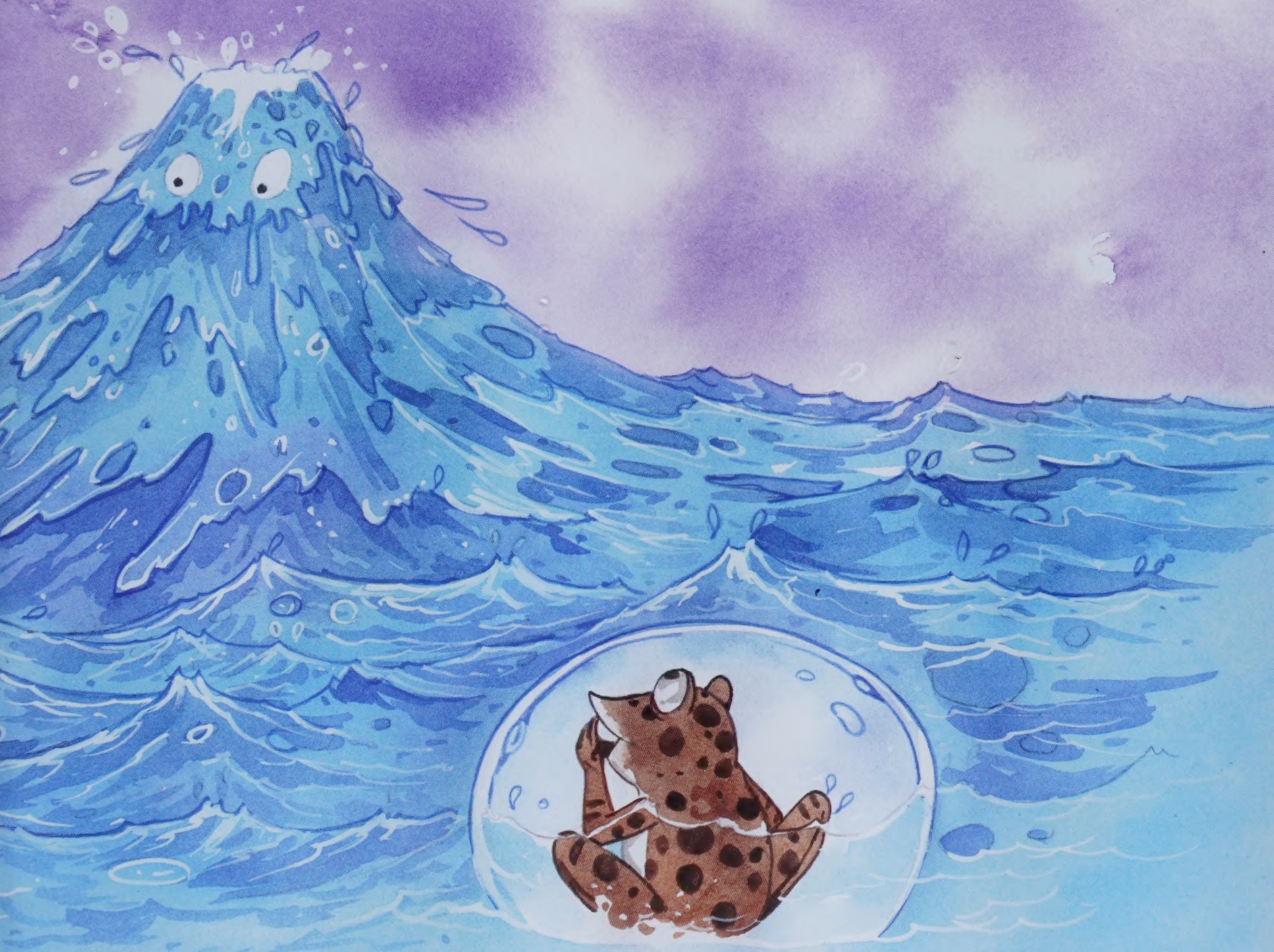




The Atlantic lifts the bubbles, on their way up. Sharks start circling them. Just as one shark opens its mouth wide to bite through the bubble, a whale pushes them aside. The octopus and squids squirt clouds of ink at the sharks. Mini and her friends begin to shake with fright.

"Y . . . you, did'nt help us?" utters a trembling Stalky to the Atlantic.

"I could easily sweep them away. My real problem is man! He throws foul stuff into me. It kills my fish and plants. He catches too many fish, kills my beautiful whales and sharks . . ." howls the Atlantic.

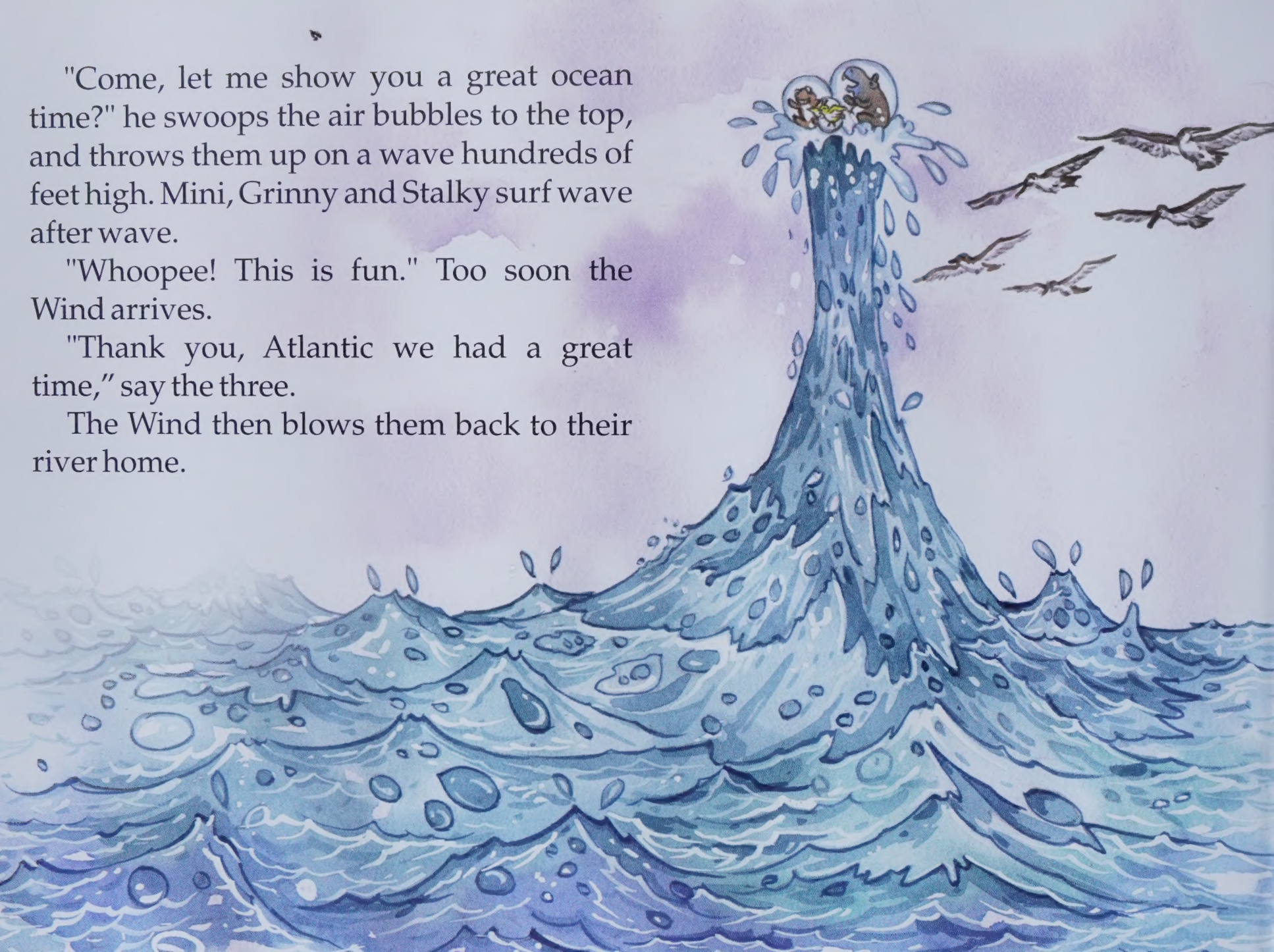


"Come, let me show you a great ocean time?" he swoops the air bubbles to the top, and throws them up on a wave hundreds of feet high. Mini, Grinny and Stalky surf wave after wave.

"Whoopee! This is fun." Too soon the Wind arrives.

"Thank you, Atlantic we had a great time," say the three.

The Wind then blows them back to their river home.



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